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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1. (Currently amended) A mechanical pencil, comprising:

a barrel;

a lead feeding mechanism disposed in said barrel ~~to be adapted~~ to tighten and feed a lead; and

a single-piece lead holder disposed between the lead feeding mechanism and a tip end of said barrel, said lead holder having a through hole through which the lead penetrates and comprising:

having holding portions, for holding the lead and

a contact portion for contacting an inner peripheral face of the barrel,

said holding portions including a first holding portion at a front portion of the lead holder and a second holding portion at a rear portion of the lead holder,

so that when a length of the lead becomes shorter than a distance between the lead feeding mechanism and the tip end of said barrel, said first holding portion holds the short lead and said second holding portion holds a next lead tightened by the lead feeding mechanism,

wherein said contact portion comprises an outer peripheral surface that is elastically displaceable radially outwardly into contact with said inner peripheral face of the barrel.

Claims 2-3 (Previously canceled).

Claim 4. (Currently amended) The mechanical pencil according to claim 1, wherein the single-piece lead holder includes a body, and

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wherein said contact portion comprises an outside cylinder provided concentrically on an outside of the body, and

wherein said outside cylinder comprises ~~being formed with a rib projecting in an~~ outside diameter direction to come into contact with an inner peripheral face of the barrel.

Claim 5. (Original) The mechanical pencil according to claim 4, wherein a slit is formed in a portion of the outside cylinder in which the rib of the outside cylinder is absent.

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Claim 6. (Currently Amended) The mechanical pencil according to claim 1, wherein said single-piece lead holder includes a body,

wherein at least one of said holding portions of said body comprises being formed with at least one blade that projects ~~comprising at least one of said holding portions; the at~~ least one blade projecting in an inside diameter direction in a front end part of said body to come into contact with the lead.

Claim 7. (Currently amended) The mechanical pencil according to claim 1, wherein the single-piece lead holder includes a body,

wherein at least one of said holding portions of said body comprises being formed with a rib that projects ~~comprising at least one of said holding portions; the rib projecting in~~ an inside diameter direction in a rear end part of said body to come into contact with the lead.

Claim 8. (Original) The mechanical pencil according to claim 7, wherein a slit is formed in a portion in which the rib is absent at the rear end part of the body.

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Claim 9. (Canceled).

Claim 10. (Currently amended) A writing instrument, comprising:

a barrel;

a writing medium feeding mechanism disposed in said barrel to be adapted to tighten and feed a writing medium; and

a single-piece writing medium holder disposed between the writing medium feeding mechanism and a tip end of said barrel, said writing medium holder having a through hole through which the writing medium penetrates and comprising:

having holding portions for holding the writing medium; and

a contact portion for contacting an inner peripheral face of the barrel,

said holding portions including a first holding portion at a front portion of the writing medium holder and a second holding portion at a rear portion of the writing medium holder so that when a length of the writing medium becomes shorter than a distance between the writing medium and the tip end of said barrel, said first holding portion holds the short writing medium and said second holding portion holds a next writing medium tightened by the writing medium feeding mechanism,

wherein said contact portions comprise an outer peripheral surface that is elastically displaceable radially outwardly into contact with said inner peripheral face of the barrel.

Claims 11-12 (Canceled).

Claim 13. (Currently amended) The writing instrument according to claim 10, wherein

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the single-piece writing medium holder includes a body, and

wherein said contact portion comprises an outside cylinder provided concentrically on an outside of the body, and

wherein said outside cylinder comprises being formed with a rib projecting in an outside diameter direction to come into contact with an inner peripheral face of the barrel.

Claim 14. (Original) The writing instrument according to claim 13, wherein a slit is formed in a portion of the outside cylinder in which the rib of the outside cylinder is absent.

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Claim 15. (Currently amended) The writing instrument according to claim 10, wherein said single-piece writing medium holder includes a body,

wherein at least one of said holding portions of said body comprises being formed with at least one blade that projects ~~comprising at least one of said holding portions, the at least one blade~~ projecting in an inside diameter direction in a front end part of said body to come into contact with the writing medium.

Claim 16. (Currently amended) The writing instrument according to claim 10, wherein the single-piece writing medium holder includes a body,

wherein at least one of said holding portions of said body comprises being formed with a rib that projects ~~comprising at least one of said holding portions, the rib~~ projecting in an inside diameter direction in a rear end part of said body to come into contact with the writing medium.

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Claim 17. (Original) The writing instrument according to claim 16, wherein a slit is formed in a portion in which the rib is absent at the rear end part of the body.

Claim 18. (Canceled).

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Claim 19. (Currently amended) The writing instrument according to claim 10, wherein said holding portions comprise a blade and a rib which come into contact with the writing medium lead passing through the through hole.

Claim 20. (Currently amended) The writing instrument according to claim 19, wherein ~~when the lead is consumed, a consumed lead is held by the blade~~ is in a front end part of said body, and a next lead is held by the rib is in a rear end part of said body.

Claim 21. (Currently amended) A writing instrument, comprising:

a tip end of a barrel; and

a single-piece writing medium holder held by said tip end of said barrel having a through hole through which a writing medium penetrates; and comprising

holding portions for holding the writing medium, said holding portions being formed at two or more positions along an axial length of said writing medium holder, said holding portions including a first holding portion at a front portion of the single-piece writing medium holder and a second holding portion at a rear portion of the single-piece writing medium holder; and

an outer peripheral surface that is elastically displaceable radially outwardly

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into contact with an inner peripheral face of the barrel;

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wherein when a length of the writing medium becomes short, said first holding portion holds the writing medium and said second holding portion holds an unused writing medium.

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